

## *Medicaid Covered Services*

*(CASA /  
Long Term Home Health  
Care Program)*

Medicaid-covered services (**CASA**) are based on medical need and include assistance provided by a **Personal Care Aide (PCA)**. If a person has active Medicaid, refer to **Community Alternative Systems Agency (CASA)** or the **Long Term Home Health Care Program (LTHHCP)** at **(716) 858-2323**. After the personal physician has completed a medical form, a caseworker and RN will do an assessment to determine how many hours of care are needed.

Medicaid covered home care (**CASA**) is regulated by the NYS Department of Social Services and provides home care services to persons with active Medicaid. Medicaid does not pay for 24-hour care. If a person requires significant hours of care assistance to be safe in their home, they may be denied **CASA** services and advised to seek other options such as nursing home placement.

If a person appears to be eligible for Medicaid, contact **Medicaid Intake** at **(716) 858-1903** to set up an appointment to apply for the benefit. Indicate that you are seeking in-home care services. If the person applying is unable to represent themselves at the Medicaid appointment in downtown Buffalo, a friend or family member may do so. If there is no one willing or able to assist in this way, contact **Erie County Department of Senior Services** at **(716) 858-8526** for Case Management services.

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### *Understanding Home Care Options*

Information about home care is complex and often difficult to understand. If you would like to talk with someone about the information in this handout, call **Erie County Department of Senior Services** at **(716) 858-8526**.

These services are funded in part by  
the Erie County Department of Senior Services,  
the NYS Office for the Aging,  
and the Administration on Aging.

## *Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program*

*(EISEP)*

**EISEP** provides only non-medical home care including homemaker / personal care and respite home or day care. Case Management services are an essential part of the program, helping clients and their families assess needs and develop a plan of care. Potential recipients of home care may be put on a waiting list while options to meet the immediate needs are explored.

**EISEP** home care and respite day programs involve a "cost share" or suggested donation, depending on income and housing expenses. The local Senior Services office does the assessment for this program. For further information, contact **Erie County Department of Senior Services** at **(716) 858-8526**.

## *Veterans Benefits*

Certain veterans or their spouses may be eligible for home care services through the Veterans' Administration. Call **(716) 862-8675**, **Veterans' Administration Medical Center Social Work** office, for more information.

## *Private Pay Home Care*

In-Home Health Care service is a very competitive market in Erie County. Agencies are listed in the Yellow Pages of the phone book under "Nurses" or "Home Health Services." Shop around to compare services and availability as well as cost before deciding which agency can best meet your needs.

# *Erie County*



# *Department of Senior Services*

## *Home Care Options*

**95 Franklin St.  
13th Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
(716) 858-8526**

**e-mail: [seniorinfo@erie.gov](mailto:seniorinfo@erie.gov)  
[www2.erie.gov/seniorservices](http://www2.erie.gov/seniorservices)**

## What is Home Care?

"Home care" refers to services that may be available to help people remain independent in their own homes. Care may be for a short duration, perhaps after discharge from a hospital, or long term, continuing for months or years.

Many decisions face the person seeking in-home care. Understanding what services are available and whom they're designed to serve may help clarify choices. Finding and paying for care may be challenging, however New York State Department of Health sets standards and regulates home care agencies that provide health or medically related services to people in their homes.

- ◆ **Certified Home Health Agencies (CHHA)** provide nursing, Home Health Aide services (help with daily living activities such as dressing, walking, etc.), physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, social work and nutritional services. They are able to bill Medicare if the patient meets Medicare home care eligibility criteria.
- ◆ **Hospices** offer home and inpatient care for terminally ill people. A person may be able to receive Medicare-covered Hospice services.
- ◆ **Licensed Home Care Services Agencies** offer all levels of nursing care, therapies, and Personal Care Aides (who help with personal care and other daily living activities) to clients who pay privately or have private insurance coverage.
- ◆ **Medicaid-Covered Home Care (CASA)** is regulated by the New York State Department of Social Services and provides home care services to people with active Medicaid. The local Social Services office determines the need for these services.
- ◆ **Long Term Home Health Care Programs** (also known as **Nursing Home Without Walls**) offer health care and support services to persons who are medically eligible for admission to a nursing home, but prefer to remain at home. This may be paid for privately or by Medicaid, depending on eligibility.
- ◆ **The Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)** is regulated by the New York State Office for the Aging for those elderly above Medicaid levels who require a minimal amount of home care to remain independent in their homes. The local Senior Services office does the assessment for this service.

## Medicare-Covered Home Care

Medicare-covered services should be the **first option explored**. Unfortunately, many seniors and their families are under the false impression that Medicare will unconditionally pay for home care. The fact is, Medicare has very specific guidelines for who is eligible for Medicare-covered services.

**A person qualifies for Medicare coverage of home health care only if all the following conditions are met:**

- ◆ Homebound (needs assistance in leaving the home);
- ◆ Has a physician certified plan of care for home care;
- ◆ Needs include either **skilled therapy** or **intermittent skilled nursing nurses**;
- ◆ The care is provided by a Medicare Certified Home Health Agency.

**Skilled therapy** may refer to physical, speech or occupational therapy.

**Skilled nursing** service must be provided by, or under the supervision of an RN to be safe and effective. Some examples of skilled nursing are:

- ⇒ Intramuscular (IM) or Intravenous (IV) injections;
- ⇒ Tube feeding or replacing feeding tubes;
- ⇒ Dressings, wound care;
- ⇒ Insertion, replacement or irrigation of catheters;
- ⇒ Teaching a person or their family how to manage treatments, medications and other aspects of an illness;
- ⇒ Observation and assessment of the condition of a person who is unstable or who may experience complications;
- ⇒ Venipuncture (drawing blood specimen) when it cannot be performed at regularly scheduled medical appointments;
- ⇒ Ostomy care during the postoperative period or if there are complications.

**Intermittent** skilled nursing means needing less than five days per week of skilled nursing services, or skilled nursing services daily for a finite, predictable period.

## Medicare-Covered Home Care Continued

If you have been discharged from the hospital recently or are experiencing medical problems that may qualify you for Medicare covered services, you may contact your physician and request a referral be made to one of the **Certified Home Health Agencies**, or you may call the **CHHA** and self refer. The **CHHA** will evaluate the case, contact your personal physician, and let you know whether or not Medicare will pay for home care services. There is no charge for this initial evaluation.

### Certified Home Health Agencies in Erie County

Catholic Health Systems:

McAuley-Seton Home Care ..... (716) 685-4870

Home Care Buffalo ..... (716) 686-8006

People, Inc. .... (716) 874-5600

Amedisys Home Health Care..... (716) 632-6420

Visiting Nursing Association (VNA) / VNA Home Care Services  
Affiliates of Kaleida Health Care ..... (716) 630-8000

WillCare, Inc..... (716) 856-7500

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**Center for Hospice and Palliative Care** also provides Medicare covered hospice home care and institutional services to patients suffering from a terminal illness.  
(716) 686-1900



**Mark C. Poloncarz**  
County Executive  
**Randall Hoak**  
Commissioner